After having experiments in the laboratory, a LTTD desalination plant with a capacity of 1-lakh litre per day was commissioned in May 2005 at Kavaratti, Lakshadweep. This plant has been inoperational continuously. This plant was handed ove to the Administration, Lakshadweep on 3rd March, 2006, which has been contributing to the needs of the population of Kavaratti, To cater to the needs of large population of coastal cities of India, development of higher capacity desalination plants is underway. An LTTD desalination plant with a capacity one Million Litre per day (MLD) has been designed, developed and demonstrated on experimental basis on the barge of Chennai in the first week of May 2006.

(c) The estimated cost of production of fresh water, being operated at Kavaratti, Lakshadweep, is 7- paise litre. It is expected to come down for 1 Million per day plant to 6 paise per litre.

Low R and D expenditure in the country

*434. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that at present total R and D expenditure is nearly 0.7 per cent of GDP, of which 15 per cent is undertaken by the corporate sector;

(b) if so, whether it is adequate as compared to even less developed country like Korea, where it is around 2.47 per cent and their corproate sector share is only 3-4 per cent; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take so that our R and D expenditure is at least 2 per cent of the GDP and R and D is critical for improving productivity?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. as per the latest available official statistics, 2004-05 the R&D expenditure as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the year 2002-03 was around 0.80% of which 25% was contributed by corporate sector comprising public and private industries. Incase of developed countries, the R&D expenditure is of the order of 2 to 3% of GDP of which major contribution comes from the corporate sector. For example, in Korea, indstry contributes about 75% of the total R&D expenditure. However, any comprison of these numbers and any

conclusions drawn will be unrealistic inview of the resources and infrastructure available in the country.

(c) The "Science and Technology Policy 2003" announced by the Government envisages to raise the level of investment on Science and Technology to at least 2% of GDP by the end of Tenth Plan with enhanced participation of R&D investment by industry. Accordingly, the Government has enhanced the S&T Plan outlay of Scientific Department from Rs. 12,022 crores in Ninth Plan to Rs. 25,243 crores in Tenth Plan. Also, several initiatives have been taken to encourage investment on R&D both in industry and institutions through several fiscal incentives and other support measures such as support in the form of grants for industrial R&D projects, support to R&D projects through sector specific programmes of various scientific and economic Ministries, income tax relief on R&D expenditure, weighted tax deduction for sponsored research, custom duty exemption on goods imported for use in Government funded R&D projects , tax holiday and national awards for outstanding R&D.

Food processing industry in Himachal Pradesh

*435. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Himachal's economy and the livelihood of a vast majority of its people depends on its fruit production, yet Himachal Pradesh loses out because no or little investment has gone into creating a food processing industry; and

(b) whether any steps are being taken to augment and build special packages for Himachal Pradesh with regard to the food processing industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) and (b) Himachal Pradesh is rich in production of horticulture produce including fruits. Government has implemented several plan schemes for promotion of food processing industries in Himachal Pradesh. Under these schemes, financial assistance is provided for technology upgradation/ modernization/establishment of the food processing units. Assistance is also provided for creation of infrastructure, support for R&D and human resource development besides other promotional measures to encourage development of the food processing industries. Enhanced quantum of assistance is available under the plan schemes for difficult areas including